

Public Service Broadcasters help bring the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity to life

*The EBU is an official partner of the current
Essen conference on cultural diversity*

Essen, 27 April 2007– Speaking today at the Essen conference on cultural diversity, organised by the German Commission for UNESCO, the President of the European Broadcasting Union, Mr Fritz PLEITGEN, ARD/WDR (DE), said; "*Public broadcasters are great supporters of the UNESCO Convention which acknowledges and defends internationally the principles of cultural diversity and media pluralism*". He noted that; "*In order to bring the UNESCO Convention to life, all parties concerned must now create the grass roots conditions for it to become an effective instrument in international negotiations and especially in the GATS negotiations*".

Mr. Pleitgen went on to say that; "*If the EU wishes to export its European Audiovisual Model around the world and benefit from the UNESCO Convention, it must ensure that it is properly safeguarded within the EU*". He added; "*The EU must ensure that the European public has the widest possible access to the rich diversity of audiovisual content made in Europe and that technology serves as a means to promote access to this content rather than to limit it*".

The EBU is an official partner of the Essen conference which offers one of the first opportunities to examine ways and means of bringing the UNESCO Convention* to life. From the 26th to the 28th of April, public broadcasters together with other relevant stakeholders, will participate in this discussion forum to better define the concept of cultural diversity prior to the organisation of the first conference of state parties to the Convention next June. The Conference will also discuss the next steps for the Convention and joint European action in Essen, which is to be the European Capital of Culture in 2010.

Mr. Pleitgen is the Executive Director of the Essen-Ruhr 2010 cultural initiative.

The EBU will continue to follow attentively the implementation of the UNESCO Convention and has called upon all its members to encourage governments to ratify the Convention as soon as possible.

EBU news



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Note to Editors:

*On 20 October 2005 the General Conference of UNESCO approved, by an overwhelming majority, the Convention on cultural diversity. The Convention entered into force on 18 March 2007, three months after its ratification by 30 States. The text of the Convention is available on the UNESCO web-site: www.unesco.org

European Broadcasting Union (EBU)

The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) is the largest association of national broadcasters in the world (74 active Members, 43 associate Members). The EBU helps public service broadcasters to deliver unique high quality programming to their audiences. It offers Members technical, operational and legal services, and coordinates a growing supply of quality content for radio, television and new platforms. It provides Members with information and analysis on media trends, and training designed to meet their needs. The EBU works to secure recognition of the crucial role of public service broadcasters in the digital audiovisual landscape. For more information, please refer to the cultural diversity section on our web-site: http://www.ebu.ch/en/union/under_banners/CulturalDiversity.php

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